

## MEMORANDUM

June 17, 1963

### EMERGENCY RECOMMENDATIONS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

TO: Mayor Hugh J. Addonizio

FROM: Daniel S. Anthony, Executive Director  
Human Rights Commission

At the close of our first year under your administration, the staff and members of the Newark Human Rights Commission want to commend you must sincerely for your attention to our requests. You have done more toward expanding and strengthening the effectiveness of the Commission than any other Mayor accomplished in a full four year term.

We are now up to our full strength for the first time in five years. You have given us two new staff positions, bringing our professional workers up to five. You have established the concept of field offices from which our staff can, for the first time, begin to meet the growing needs of the people. You spoke at our largest open meeting and shared the platform with a controversial figure in a dignified and courageous manner. You re-convened our moribund Clergy Advisory Council. You called for cooperation from all other City Departments and Agencies. You increased the stature of this agency by including its Director in your Cabinet.

Finally, you agreed with our Chairman to maintain an open door and an open mind on salary adjustments and the additional personnel we have requested for total effectiveness.

We think this is a wonderful record of progress. Unfortunately, because of the nature of the times in which we live and because we happen to be your Human Rights Commission during the greatest racial revolution in our country, we have all been asked to do more than ever before. Naturally when we are required to work harder and faster, we have to call upon you for help.

The purpose of this memorandum is to spell out a few recommendations which we feel might aid us in maintaining peace and harmony in Newark. We feel furthermore that your courageous leadership at this time can give faith and hope to many thousands of our young and older residents who have become discouraged and frustrated.

A. Integration and Education

1. Although the Board of Education at its last meeting came up with a revised partial open enrollment plan, I do not believe this palliative measure is going to satisfy even a small percentage of minority parents.

Within the week, Benjamin Epstein, Principal of Weequahic High School, will have prepared another approach to Newark's schools' problems which I shall pass on to you as soon as I receive it.

In the meantime, I must strongly urge you to use your influence, or to liberate your Human Rights Commission to exert its influence, with the Superintendent of Schools and the Board of Education.

Might they be asked to use the summer months to inaugurate the South Side human renewal program for Newark Youth? The year of decision is already upon us and we have nothing but a West Kinney 7th grade "Newark Plan". Special schools, the Princeton Plan, Higher Horizon programs, Negro Principals and Administrators, the South Side Human Renewal Plan are all possible positive approaches to the resolution of our Nation's 1954 Supreme Court mandate, but all of them collectively are no more than experimental hopes, unless we have the money to put them in operation.

Newark can never solve its de facto segregation in the schools, because it is fast becoming a de facto segregated city. When 64.7% of our elementary school population is non-white, how long can we continue to delude ourselves that Newark as a whole is going to remain white or return to its 1960 percentage of 1/3 Negro and 2/3 white? It is just not in the cards.

Because our President and most Southern state legislatures have found no solutions for our Country's integration problems, more Negroes are moving to Newark every day, just as more whites flee to the suburbs. Newark is now the only northern city approaching a larger Negro than white population. All the forces of Urban Renewal and Negro Removal are not going to reverse this trend. The history of our Nation and the lack of a national or local solution for the South are facts with which we must deal realistically here in Newark.

The overwhelming reality we now face in Newark is that a majority Negro City cannot blame its Board of Education alone for de facto segregation in the schools. Therefore, some meaningful and imaginative approaches to our growing educational and drop-out problems must be sought. Many committees are hard at work, but they have no funds and no full time Director.

a. May I suggest here, Mr. Mayor, that you re-read the March Recommendations of the Newark Human Rights Commission to you and the City Council. It will remind you that one of our desperate needs is for this full time Youth Coordinator at once. Does the City Council understand this and the tie-in of Rutgers South Side Human Renewal Plan? What or who is holding it up? These are questions you must answer, or free this Commission to start asking questions and prodding for city wide action.

b. In our March Recommendations we suggest an immediate request to the State and Federal Government for massive financial assistance for the improved education of our deprived and disadvantaged youth. Benjamin Epstein's impending memo will elaborate this request. Cities like Newark can no longer be responsible for solving national social problems without State and Federal financing.

I believe you can be the first big City Executive to reverse the down-ward trend our Northern cities are following. Newark needs millions in human renewal funds for its youth. If you and the City Council start officially requesting it now, you could be the first Metropolitan Mayor to apprise President Kennedy of a dramatic new approach to the Northern educational dilemma. Newark and no other major city can be expected to pay the nation's debt to a Negro sub-culture which has been robbed of its birthright for centuries. Without assistance, there is no way out!

2. If Newark must be labeled an area of social and educational deprivation, I think you must be courageous enough to accept that odious "label." I am afraid that if we are not honest about our local insoluble problem of upgrading our youth now, the enormity of the social disease and the complexity of its causes will inundate us before we have cried for help.

3. While we are waiting for federal financial assistance, the Board of Education should be advised by you to hire a staff of Human Relations professionals to begin working on this vast question of how to give better than equal education to all our deprived youth. Many of the major Northern cities have full time specialists in intergroup relations working around the clock on this school question. Newark has only a lay citizens committee with little power and less time to accomplish the mission.

If something is not done soon to show the Negro community that we are working conscientiously on this educational matter, I fear we shall become the next "Englewood".

4. As a stop-gap measure, Mr. Mayor, you might now authorize the Newark Human Rights Commission to hire the intergroup relations specialist in schools problems which we recommended in our Annual Report of 1962.\*\* And if you are in the mood for accepting the reality of our race problems in Newark schools, it would be a propitious moment to give us the O.K. to recruit a Police Community Specialist in Intergroup Relations. No matter what else develops, these two professionals are sorely needed now.

(You will recall the Newark Human Rights Commission requested both of these professional positions in its first memo to you last July. Do you feel the time is ripe for some action on these jobs? If not, then the Board of Education and the Police Department should be alerted for some immediate recruiting for these professionals by you.)

5. You have mentioned on several occasions the possibility of appointing an Equal Employment Opportunities Coordinator to work with our Commission, but directly under your supervision.

Do you think the time has come to assign Paul Reilly, or preferably Earl Harris, to work full time on this aspect of your work until some adjustments have been made in Newark's critical unemployment picture?

With the recent Newark Coordinating Committee's request for a strong group consisting of 1/2 of their selections, something ought to be done. In this connection, you should authorize this Commission to cooperate officially with the Division on Civil Rights in investigating city contractors and local Building Trade Unions. Please start letting the public know what you are doing about their long smoldering problems.

6. In connection with our Equal Employment problems, may I suggest your convening Human Rights Conferences such as President Kennedy has done with the Clergy, Labor, Business and Industrial leaders. Economic survival is the first factor in man's quest for self preservation.

The purpose of these conferences would be to break the employment barriers across the boards; to reduce mounting Negro, Puerto Rican and youth unemployment, and to give minority individuals a greater hope for self survival.

#### B. POLICE COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

Although I hesitate bringing up a general subject on which our Commission point of view was more or less vetoed by the Mayor, I believe the situation has altered sufficiently in 2 short months, so that you will not consider these following suggestions as sour grapes.

I am not asking for a Police-Community Relations Advisory Board. I am asking that you review the entire Newark situation with your Police Director toward the goal of coming up with a compromise acceptable to the New Negro of Newark.

Long smoldering Negro frustration and resentment are most readily vented against white police authority. This being a fact of Negro life, both North and South, your Police Director is in the most sensitive spot of your administration. If his men make one major mistake at the wrong time and place, tempers are such today that the fuse will be lit.



1. I am therefore suggesting, Mr. Mayor, that you ask your Police Director to appoint his most sympathetic and understanding men to an Emergency Human Rights Squad whose function it will be to take over immediate command in the event of a racial conflict. Naturally, this must be a highly integrated unit whose members understand why many Negroes fear or hate policemen. One overtly anti-Negro member of this squad, Negro or white, could result in future tragic incidents resulting from his attitudes. Certainly the top Negro officers under your Police Director's command should be on constant call during the crucial months ahead.

a. In the event your Police Director will not accept this concept, you should be prepared with an alternative recommendation: That you as Mayor will be apprised of any incidents which appear to be racially inflammatory, and that aggrieved parties will be brought to you at once.

b. Also, I urgently request that you do all you can to accelerate and increase the courses in Human Rights and Race Relations training so that all policemen will become more knowledgeable as to the causative factors behind Negro aggression, hostility and police resistance.

It only takes one hot-headed Negro or one trigger-happy or fearful officer to ignite the spark which could end in a local conflagration.

Because many of Newark's Negroes believe they are not getting fair and equal treatment from Newark Police, it is going to be necessary for you to formalize their grievance procedure in some way. The Negro leadership knows it can go to you for a hearing, but the average citizen is not aware of your open door.

2. Since the Newark Human Rights Commission has no official sanction to hear or investigate a growing number of complaints of police mistreatment, I am suggesting that you publicize your "Open Door Policy" for "Talks with the Mayor". The psychological effect of this Executive Hearing of Citizens' Complaints will, I think, do much to reduce some of the aggravation which seems to be increasing in our City. You might use the Newark Human Rights Commission to screen the legitimate from the crank complaints.

3. On the other hand, it may well be feasible to appoint an Executive Council of your Human Rights Commission to hear these citizens' gripes on racial matters. Unless you shift some of this responsibility to an Executive Council or some other fully constituted non-Police Agency, you are going to be personally plagued with a discouraging number of real and contrived cases of unwarranted police mistreatment and/or alleged police brutality.

You see, Mayor, the down-and-out unemployed Negro is getting more aggressive as each frustrating day fades into every hopeless night. As his frustration mounts, aggression is his normal human outlet. But, of course, policemen also are human. They too can stand only so much taunting and resistance. When an irresistible (Negro) force meets an immovable (Police) object, something has to give, and as you know full well, the Negro is tired of giving. Whether we understand this or not--- "he has had it".

Now, since the policeman has to be right in our culture, and since every Negro knows this cruel but basic fact of life, the safety valves are greatly reduced for both white officers and Negro citizens. There doesn't seem to be any way out, once the situation gets as far as a Negro-Police open confrontation. However, I believe sincerely there is something else you can do now to begin righting the wrongs of our past legal justice, as the Negro sees it, and as many more educated whites are now beginning to perceive it also.

4. You may want to convene your Municipal Judges, Police Director and Corporation Counsel for a depth exploration of the ways and means of meting out a new kind of American justice toward the Negro. At this late stage of your successful public career, I do not have to tell you the time-honored, traditional facts of 2nd class justice for Negroes, in Municipal Courts, as they perceive it. They have never felt they got a fair shake.

After this past month or two of the Carrie Powell, Lido Club and Pennington Court cases, I am sure you are aware that Negroes are no longer going to tolerate the old protective relationship between the Municipal Courts and the police force. They cannot be convinced that "Negro crime" is not partially a white man's statistic. (I believe the move to oust our Chief Magistrate is a pertinent case in point.)

To be quite blunt, Mr. Mayor, you will have to explore the possibility of eliminating "second class justice" with your Police Director, Corporation Counsel and your Municipal Magistrates. (In this critically needed investigation, I am strongly suggesting a sincere utilization of the services of Judges Narol, Lohman and Hazelwood, all of whom are sympathetic to the more Constitutional interpretation of municipal police protection and legal procedures in regard to the Puerto Rican and Negro violator.)

I cannot conclude this point without telling you that I personally feel police work and the subsequent administration of justice is by far the most sensitive area of racial tension and conflict we face in Newark.

The Negro coming from the South has learned through cruel and devastating personal experience to fear and resent the cop as well as America's lip service to his constitutional rights in city courts. Long years of lynch law and police brutalization in the South, as they are presently being revived in Birmingham and Jackson, bring our milder Northern practices into sharper focus and scrutiny.

#### IN CONCLUSION:

Man has a basic need to aspire to self improvement. All persons want to be somebodies. For too many centuries we have consciously and unconsciously contrived to keep the majority of Negroes as nobodies.

In your forthright attempt to initiate these proposals for Human Rights, you may be criticized by some important persons in and out of your administration, but I hope they too will eventually see the value of these suggestions.

If any disagreements should develop, I can only pray you will remain firm in your past principles of equality, justice and dignity for all. When this Revolutionary period blends into mid-twentieth century American history, the name of Hugh J. Addonizio will be remembered as the first Mayor in America who had the courage of his racial convictions.

The time for greatness is now. You have the mind and the heart to become a national leader in solving the biggest social problem of the world's greatest democracy.

*Daniel S. Anthony*

Daniel S. Anthony, Executive Director